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Rhetorically Analyzing English Resistance Arguments in Arabic-Speaking Countries

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Abstract: The English language has grown to become international, but at the same time, many indigenous languages have become endangered and even extinct. Recognizing these trends, many scholars have begun recording and trying to save endangered languages. Many speakers and writers in popular media have addressed the trend of the globalizing English language and the endangerment and extinction of indigenous languages as well. Articles and speeches of this nature, against using English or for using Arabic have made their way into the discussion about global languages. This research analyzes arguments against the globalization of English or for the increased usage of Arabic. Research of these arguments is significant to understand the spectrum between the positive and negative impacts of English as a global language. Though Arabic is not officially considered an endangered language, with the physical and cultural presence and influence of the West in the Middle East, the issue is highly relevant and has been covered in popular Arabic media as well. Arguments of this nature from popular media sources such as international news sources, TEDtalks, and specifically Arabic news sources were studied using a rhetorical analysis. In total, sixty-five articles and speeches have been used in this study. Findings from rhetorically analyzing these sources showed that certain thematic language around this issue is present. The discussion may revolve around the extinction/endangerment issue and the idea of loss, the aspect of a dominant or majority language and culture taking over and the language of imperialism, the idea and language of globalization, or the advocacy for local languages as a source of nationalism. These findings are useful to show the number of ways that this issue can be framed and shed light on the influence that media may have on the opinions of the public on English as a global language.